

With just a few

Changes

to normal day to day lives, citizens and homeowners can have a positive impact on our local streams, rivers and the Chesapeake Bay by reducing pollution of stormwater runoff from our houses and properties. Simple activities like washing our cars, disposing of household wastes and taking care of our yards and gardens in an environmentally friendly manner can contribute a great deal to improve the quality of our drinking and recreational waters. These actions can provide enjoyable returns like pristine water bodies for water sports and fishing and quality seafood for consumers. The informational tips in this brochure can help you in your efforts to reduce pollution runoff.



**For more ways to protect our land,
air and water resources visit:**

www.mtagogreen.com

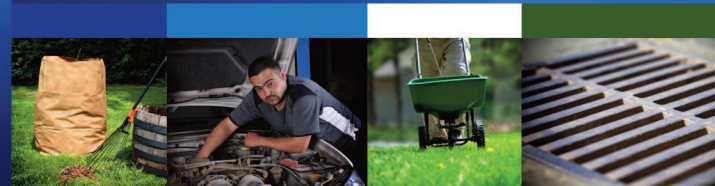
www.epa.gov/npdes/stormwater

www.mde.state.md.us

**PROTECTING
OUR**

Water

**Helpful tips on
preventing storm
water pollution**

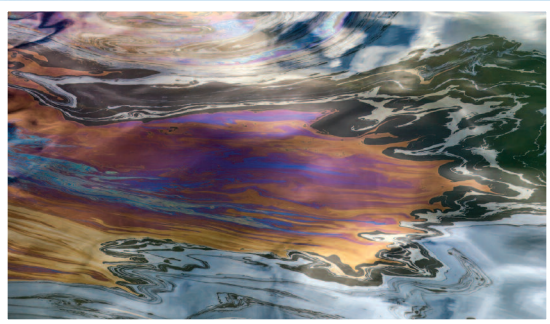


Stormwater is:

Rainfall or snowmelt that flows over impervious surfaces like parking lots, streets and roof tops, is collected by storm sewer systems and eventually discharged to streams, reservoirs and bays.

Stormwater Pollution is:

When stormwater flows overland it can pick up trash, chemicals, dirt, waste and oil products and deposit these pollutants into our water resources used for swimming, fishing and drinking water.



Impacts of Stormwater Pollution:

- Dirt or sediment can silt in navigation channels, destroy fish spawning habitat and cloud waters stunting aquatic vegetation growth.
- Algae blooms from excess nutrients can deprive water of oxygen causing fish kills.
- Disease-causing bacteria from sewage overflows and malfunctioning septic systems cause swimming beach closures and contaminate shellfish harvest areas.

- Improperly disposed pesticides, insecticides, paint, solvents and motor oils can pollute waters and are toxic to waterfowl, fish and shellfish.
- Humans can get sick from eating fish or shellfish from contaminated waters.
- Polluted stormwater runoff can degrade water quality at public drinking water reservoirs causing increased treatment costs.

Residential Pollution Prevention Actions:

- *Lawn Care*
 - Limit use of pesticides and fertilizers and follow manufacturer's instructions.
 - Compost leaves and grass clippings - don't sweep into streets or storm drains.
 - Don't overwater your lawn.
- *Auto Care*
 - Washing your car and degreasing auto parts at home can send detergents to the storm drain.
 - Wash car on the lawn or take to a car wash that recycles washwater.
 - Dispose of used oil and antifreeze at local recycling centers.
- *Pet waste*
 - Pet waste left in yards is a source of bacteria and excess nutrients to local streams.
 - Pick up after your pets and bag and dispose in trash or flush down toilet.



- Pet waste can be a further health problem by attracting rats.
- *Septic Systems*
 - Malfunctioning septic systems overflow and waste can be picked up by stormwater runoff.
 - Bacteria and viruses from improperly treated waste can pollute drinking water.
 - Service septic systems regularly (pump out tank every 3-5 years).
 - Don't dispose of hazardous household products in the toilet.

